

WASHINGTON, D.C. Today, Congressman Sanford Bishop, a member of the House Appropriations Committee, announced that the House of Representatives passed the Energy & Water Development Appropriations Act for FY07. Bishop, who helped to craft the bill, voted for its passage last night. The final vote was 404 to 20.

Funding provided by this bill includes \$2,000,000 for the Army Corps of Engineers to restore the Chattahoochee fall line ecosystem. The Committee also provided \$900,000 for the Corps of Engineers to control the growth of hydrilla in Lake Seminole.

Congressman Bishop, along with the members of the entire Georgia Delegation, successfully removed a provision from the bill which would have prohibited the Army Corps of Engineers from revising the guides used by the Corps to manage the entire river and water system for the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, Flint River Basin, and related water resources.

Congressman Bishop said, "I was very pleased to join with my other 12 Georgia colleagues, in what was a truly bi-partisan effort to remove language from this bill, which would have stopped the Corps of Engineers from updating its management plans for the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers." He went on, "It was a moment of which all Georgians should be very proud, as we helped to secure critical funding for our native rivers."

The amendment, which by a vote of passed 206 to 201, will allow the Army Corps of Engineers to update its management of the system, which includes the Chattahoochee, Flint, Alabama, Catoosa, Tallapoosa, and Apalachicola Rivers. The original Committee bill contained language which would have interfered with the Corps' federally authorized purpose to manage these complex reservoir systems. Further, Congress would have been inserting itself into a three state negotiations on state water rights as well.

Remarking about one of the local projects included in the Energy Appropriations bill, Bishop said, "The Chattahoochee River represents a major untapped resource for recreation, tourism and related activity in the Columbus metropolitan area. However, without Federal assistance, much of the River's potential will be lost. More importantly, returning the river to its natural state is expected to serve as a tremendous boost to economic development and tourism in Southwest Georgia."

The Energy and Water bill also provides a total of \$30 billion in budget authority for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Interior including the Bureau of Reclamation, the Department of Energy, and several Independent Agencies. This bill is \$172 million below last year's level and \$546 million above the President's request.